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future scholar to use in a scientific manner the documents here brought to light.

J. W. T.

*England und die Katholische Kirche unter Elisabeth und den Stuarts.*

VON ARNOLD OSKAR MEYER. Erster Band. *England und die Katholische Kirche unter Elisabeth.* [Bibliothek des Kgl. Preussischen Historischen Instituts in Rom. Band VI.] (Rome: Loescher and Company. 1911. Pp. xxvii, 489.)

THIS stately volume by a former member of the Royal Prussian Historical Institute in Rome, now a professor in Rostock, is a noteworthy contribution to the right understanding of an involved and disputed period of English history. The author has not only laid under contribution the archives of Rome, especially the treasures of the Vatican, but has made extensive use of unpublished material in Great Britain, and has enjoyed the assistance and advice of the leading specialists in this field. The result is a significant addition to our means of comprehending the relations of the English Catholics with the Elizabethan government, and with the papacy, Spain, and their exiled compatriots on the Continent.

No question has been more controverted than the proportion of Roman Catholics to the general population of England under Elizabeth. Dr. Meyer subjects the problem to careful consideration and reaches the apparently conclusive result that the Roman adhesion, by 1580, was not more than 2.6 to 3 per cent. of the total population of the kingdom, and that, while it undoubtedly increased, its growth to 1680 was not more than proportionate to the general augmentation of the population. Elizabeth's success was made possible only by the smallness of the Catholic minority. The great falling away from the Roman obedience was in the first years of Elizabeth. The collapse of the ancient hierarchy, the attractiveness of services in the mother-tongue, the popularity of the strong and peaceful early reign of Elizabeth, and especially the total neglect of the spiritual interests of the Roman Catholics by the pope and their Continental fellow-believers till after the Bull of Deposition and the beginnings of the English mission, swept the bulk of the population into the Anglican communion. This process was assisted, Dr. Meyer holds, by the very important modification of the title of supremacy assumed by Elizabeth as compared with that worn by Henry VIII.—a difference the significance of which he believes to have been inadequately estimated. This great religious readjustment was not primarily the effect of legal pressure.

When at last Catholic zeal, especially that of England's own sons, undertook to regain the land through seminary priests, and later through Jesuits, a chapter was written which Dr. Meyer, Protestant though he is, shows to be one of the most heroic in missionary story. For the Roman missionaries as a whole the charge that they were conspirators

or deceitful when brought face to face with the government is false. There were conspirators enough on the Continent, but most of those who risked their lives in England were simply and honestly actuated by spiritual aims. Yet, even so, the situation was tragic in its impossibility of adjustment. The "bloody question", whether, in case of invasion, the missionary would hold to the party of the queen or that of the pope, was one which the government could hardly fail to put, the more so that the missionary priest was the adviser of the Catholic laity, and to give either answer was, to most missionaries, to risk soul or body. The persecutions under Elizabeth, cruel as they were, were marked by a statesmanlike policy absent from those of Mary and from those of contemporary Continental sovereigns, and by a relatively small number of victims.

The author shows, as has never been so conclusively exhibited before, that plots to murder Elizabeth, though not originating with the pope, had the full sympathy and moral support of Gregory XIII. His account of the Armada is valuable, but here he is on more familiar ground. Its defeat he ascribes justly to the skill of the English seamen and their new naval tactics. Lastly he sketches with great insight the quarrels in the ranks of the English Catholics themselves between the secular priesthood and the Jesuits, and the diverse policies, national and religious, pursued by the rival factions. The value of the volume is increased by a large appendix of hitherto unpublished documents, and a chronological list of manuscript sources, chiefly in Rome, with indication where they may be found. The two further volumes, in which the author proposes to continue his studies to 1689, will be awaited with anticipation.

WILLISTON WALKER.

*The Reconstruction of the English Church.* By ROLAND G. USHER, Ph.D., Instructor in History, Washington University. In two volumes. (New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1910. Pp. ix, 423; vi, 426.)

As in political, so in church history, it used to be the earlier part of Queen Elizabeth's reign which attracted the special interest of researchers. Father H. N. Birt has only recently reminded us that "the Elizabethan *religious* settlement" continues to be a fighting ground for Protestant and Catholic historians. Mr. Usher may claim the merit of drawing our attention to the less conspicuous problems of the *constitutional* settlement of the Church. He holds that the constitutional question was not seriously grappled with before the times of the great reorganizer, Archbishop Bancroft, the hero of his book. "Few things are more difficult for us to comprehend, who have been brought up to believe that the English Church was established in its present form by Elizabeth, than the great scope of the reconstruction of 1604" (I. 357). If his thesis is provable at all, Mr. Usher certainly is the man to do it